

From: Ronny Ong
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I agree that the proposed settlement is an acceptable way to resolve the antitrust action against Microsoft Corporation. The settlement obtains timely and adequate protection for consumers, but does not grant unjustified advantage to Microsoft competitors. I believe that the existing antitrust laws are fully applicable in today's technological world. At the same time, the monopoly perceived to be held by Microsoft is clearly different than traditional abusive monopolies.

In a monopoly held by a utility, consumers are forced to purchase the product from the utility on an ongoing basis, month after month. The only choice is to do without the product. In the case of consumers who purchased Windows 95, they remain free to use that product today without ever having paid additional money to Microsoft. Even if we assume that the direct competition to Windows (e.g. BeOS, OS/2, Linux, Solaris, Unix, etc.) are irrelevant, consumers are not forced in any way to upgrade to newer versions of Windows unless they desire the additional benefits of the newer versions. To prevent Microsoft from being able to add features to its operating system in order to compete for those upgrades would be a misuse of regulatory and judicial power.

If we survey all manner of industries and product categories outside personal computer software, there are many manufacturers permitted to favor their own add-ons over those provided by aftermarket suppliers, even when those manufacturers have an overwhelming share of the market. Microsoft makes a tremendous amount of technical information available to Independent Software Vendors (ISVs) on a very timely basis, and the size of the Windows marketplace (which has been used to illustrate Microsoft's monopoly position) is truly a result of how open a platform Windows has been.

This nation is obligated to protect equal opportunity but not to impose equality where not deserved. An extraordinary volume of dissention is being generated by those who have failed to compete successfully with Microsoft in the free market, as well as a relatively small number of disgruntled and greedy consumers. Rational consideration, however, cannot conclude that ongoing litigation serves any purpose besides boosting the self-importance of a few parties and their attorneys. Prompt settlement with Microsoft is in the public good.

Regards,

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